

# Executive Member for Resources

Friday, 29 February 2008

**Present:** Councillor Alan Cullens (Executive Member for Resources)

**Officers:** Gary Hall (Assistant Chief Executive (Business Transformation)), Jamie Carson (Corporate Director (People)) and Ruth Hawes (Assistant Democratic Services Officer)

## 08.04 DECLARATIONS OF ANY INTERESTS

The Executive Member had no reason to declare an interest in the meeting's agenda items.

## 08.05 PEOPLE DIRECTORATE - FEES AND CHARGES FOR 2008/09

The Executive Member for Resources received and considered a report of the Corporate Director (People) reviewing the fees and charges for the facilities and services provided or overseen by the People Directorate for 2008/09.

The report recommended increases in the fees and charges for facilities and activities provided directly by the People Directorate generally in line with current inflation levels, following research and comparison with neighbouring authorities and competitors to ensure that the charges remained competitive. The charges for the commercial hiring and use of Community Centres by externally funded agencies were to remain at the 2007/08 level in an attempt to recover lost business.

The Director reported that the operators of Duxbury Golf Course, Glendale, proposed to freeze charges in 2008/09 and introduce two new pricing categories in order to retain and attract new customers.

Community Leisure Services intended to introduce inflationary increases and rationalise charges for indoor leisure facilities in the Leisure Centres to resolve current anomalies. In addition, the Corporate Director (People) had negotiated a 1% support fee being charged to Community Leisure Services, which was expected to generate an annual income in the region of £25,000 for the Council.

### **Decisions made under delegated authority:**

**(1) That the fees and charges for the facilities and services provided or facilitated by the People Directorate for 2008/09, as set out in the appendix attached to the Corporate Director's submitted report, be approved and adopted with effect from 1 April 2008.**

**(2) That the proposal to charge Community Leisure Services a 1% support fee be endorsed.**

### **Reason for Decisions:**

The fees and charges structure will maximise income and ensure the delivery of the social objective to increase access to services.

### **Alternative option(s) considered and rejected:**

Other levels of increase and reduction have been considered, but these alternatives did not meet the twin objectives of maximising income and increasing access to services as well as the recommended levels.

**08.06 VILLAGE HALL AND COMMUNITY CENTRE GRANTS FUND - ALLOCATION OF GRANTS**

The Executive Member for Resources considered a report of the Corporate Director (People) on the recommended disbursement of the £120,000 budget allocation for the payment of one-off capital grants to support village halls and community centres throughout the Borough.

The one-off capital grant programme had been widely promoted and the report outlined and commented on the nine applications for grant assistance that had been received before the deadline date. The Council's expenditure was expected to lever in additional resources in the region of £560,000 and grants would only be awarded pro rata to actual expenditure on the projects and subject to external match funding being secured in appropriate cases.

The report also suggested an appropriate use of the sum that would remain unspent in the grants programme if the Director's recommendations on the nine applications were accepted by the Executive Member.

**Decisions made under delegated authority:**

**(1) That approval be given to the award of the following grants to the Community Centres/Village Halls/organisations identified below from the available resources in the Village Hall and Community Centre Grants Fund, subject to compliance with specified conditions:**

	<b>Grant Awarded</b>
<b>Charnock Richard Community Centre Trust</b>	<b>£25,000</b>
<b>Brindle Community Hall</b>	<b>£10,026</b>
<b>Adlington and District Community Association</b>	<b>£1,400</b>
<b>Croston Community Centre</b>	<b>£30,000</b>
<b>Mawdesley Village Hall</b>	<b>£18,000</b>

**(2) That the grants of £10,000 and £11,683 be awarded provisionally to the Mawdesley Bowling Centre and the Whittle-le-Woods Playing Field Association respectively, subject to the Corporate Director (People) being satisfied that there will be wider community benefits, following discussion with the applicants.**

**(3) That the application from St Mary's Village Hall, Eccleston for a £10,000 grant be refused on the ground that insufficient evidence of financial need has been produced.**

**(4) That the application from Fairview Youth and Community Association for a £2,500 grant be refused on the ground that monies can be provided from an existing commuted sum held by the Council for the purpose required.**

**(5) That approval be given to the balance of £13,891 remaining in the Grants Fund being spent on the decoration of the Council's Community Centres at Astley Village, Clayton Brook and Eaves Green, subject to the relevant virements being completed.**

**Reason for decisions:**

The grants will help to increase accessibility to Village Halls and Community Centres throughout the Borough, with a resultant increase in participation in community activities.

**Alternative option(s) considered and rejected:**

None.

**08.07 COTSWOLD HOUSE, CHORLEY - FEES AND CHARGES FOR 2008/09**

The Executive Member for Resources received and considered a report of the Assistant Chief Executive (Business Transformation) on proposals to increase the rent and service charges at Cotswold House, Chorley, which provided short term accommodation for homeless persons. Whilst the Council had retained ownership of the premises, Chorley Community Housing was currently responsible for the management of the Centre.

Chorley Community Housing's budget for 2008/09 has assumed an increase of 4.4% in the charges for Cotswold House, which matched the increases for general dwelling rents forecasted by the Department for Communities and Local Government.

**Decision made under delegated authority:**

**That the following increased weekly charges for short term homelessness accommodation at Cotswold House be approved for implementation from the first week of 2008/09:**

- **Rent charge - £52.20;**
- **Heating charge - £9.06;**
- **Service charge - £41.57**

**Reason for Decision:**

The increased charges accord with the Department for Communities and Local Government's Housing Subsidy Settlement and are consistent with the budgetary assumptions of Chorley Community Housing.

**Alternative option(s) considered and rejected:**

None.

Executive Member for Resources